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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

REPORT

25X1

SUBJECT Resistance and Unrest

DATE DISTR. 18 May 1955

NO. OF PAGES 6

DATE OF INFO.

REQUIREMENT

25X1

PLACE ACQUIRED

REFERENCES

DATE ACQUIRED

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ARMY review completed.

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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STATE	EV	#X	ARMY	#X	NAVY	#X	AIR	#X	FBI		AEC						
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Organized Resistance Groups

1. Sometime in 1951, [] the existence of the White Legion (Bila Legie), an alleged underground anti-regime organization operating in Slovakia. []

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2. [] references had been made to the White Legion by students of the Prerov (N 49-27, E 17-27) gymnasium. [] Some mentioned that it was a fascist organization; others, that its aims were the independence of Slovakia. [] no further information on the White Legion.

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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4. Sometime in 1952, []

[] an aviation engineer employed by the Czechoslovak Air Research Institute, Prague, was arrested at night in his apartment [] by two StB policemen. He was tried and sentenced to 12 years at hard labor in the Jachymov uranium mines. []

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[] accused of failure to report a secret anti-regime organization allegedly composed of students. There had been a surprise raid made on their meeting place somewhere in Prague. Two StB officers were shot during the raid and it was believed that some letters addressed [] by his girl friend, also a member of the secret student organization, were found.

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Unorganized Resistance

5. In about April 1953, the statue of Thomas Masaryk, located on the main street of the city of Prostějov (N 49-28, E 17-07) near the city hall, was being removed by government order. When workers tried to complete the removal, []

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[] the people of Prostějov interfered with their task. The next day, however, a group of soldiers (number unknown []) arrived with an army tank and pulled the statue from its base using the tank. While this was happening, some students from a nearby gymnasium arrived on the scene and started a second demonstration. The students were joined by the civilian population. During the course of the demonstration, a Communist, speaking over the city hall loudspeaker, tried to break up the demonstration by telling the people that Masaryk was an enemy and oppressor of working classes. As a result, the demonstrators entered the city hall, broke all the windows, and threw the loudspeaker system into the street. The soldiers did not take any action, but a group of People's Militia (LM - Lidova Milice) was called out and quelled the demonstration.

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6. []

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7. Martial law was imposed on the city of Prostějov for three days. No one was allowed on the streets between the hours of 2000 and 0800.

8. [] about 30 gymnasium students and about 80 other civilians were arrested and interrogated, but [] some were dismissed the next day. The blame for the demonstration was placed on the students. In retaliation for this act, students of the graduating class of the Prostějov gymnasium who participated in the above-described demonstrations were not permitted to take their

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final examinations (matura) and consequently were unable to continue studies in universities.

9.

"Liberation Day"

many flowers and wreaths were always placed on the spot where a monument was to have been erected in honor of the US Army. The monument has never been completed; only the foundation was laid. In 1950, even the foundation of the monument was removed, but the people kept placing flowers and wreaths there and, finally, billboards were erected around the spot. In spite of this, people kept placing flowers and wreaths in front of the billboards. During the June 1953 currency devaluation demonstrations at Pilsen, the billboards were torn down and burned.

10.

four youths, approximately 21 years of age and sons of laborers, were tried and hanged for setting fire to six grain stacks in Krnov (N 50-06, E 17-43) sometime in the summer of 1953. They were accused of working for American espionage agents.

Strikes and Absenteeism

11.

there had been a miners' strike at Ostrava in December 1952. The strike lasted about ten days and was a result of discontinuing special privileges, such as rents at lower rates, additional food and meat, and coal rations, which the miners had been receiving. Miners reported to the mine and went down into the shafts but did not do any work. Some of the CSAD drivers from Prerov were dispatched to the Ostrava mining area to haul all available coal to the local steel foundries in order to prevent a production stoppage at the foundries. The coal was obtained from schools which were recessed and from some of the other factories. The miners continued the strike until their special privileges were restored.

12.

a large number of strikers was later arrested and about 75 remained imprisoned after work was resumed.

Government Restrictions

13.

since the Czechoslovak people keep their grudges against the government to themselves out of fear of being heard and reported by informers, it was difficult to acquire any information on their dissatisfaction with government restrictions. However, the continuing shortage of meat and lard no doubt contributed to dissatisfaction with the government. Although food ration tickets no longer existed, it was still difficult to obtain meat and lard. Whenever meat was on sale, waiting lines formed in front of the nationalized butcher shops as early as 0400 hours. When the supply was sold out, those who did not reach the counter in time simply went without meat. Every buyer received a predetermined amount of meat for each member of the family. It was impossible to buy as much meat as one desired; pork was in particularly short supply.

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Attitude Toward the Government

14. [] the Communist regime was losing influence in Czechoslovakia. Initially, many individuals agreed with the nationalization of factories and the theory of worker ownership of factories, but later they realized that they had been victimized by empty promises. In order to survive, they had to work ten hours a day at low wages, while the prices of commodities were exorbitantly high.

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The Regime's Effect on Youth

18. [] youth up to the age of ten were basically pro-regime; the older ones were not. Regime influence depended in large measure on the parents. [] approximately 95% of students of higher learning were anti-regime in sentiment, although nominally members of the Czechoslovak Youth Organization (CSM - Ceskoslovensky svaz mladese). They were members of CSM only in order to continue their studies, since without such membership admission to schools of higher learning was impossible.

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Security Forces

19. [] regular uniformed security forces [] never took drastic action against the civilian population. At such times, for example, as the currency devaluation disorders in Pilsen in June 1953 and the previously described demonstration in Prostějov on the occasion of the removal of the Masaryk monument, it was the People's Militia who fired their weapons when called out to quell riots and disorders. []

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Resistance Potential

20. [] in the event of hostilities with Western Powers, about 50% of the Czechoslovak people would openly resist the regime if they were supplied with arms and backed by Allied Forces. About 40% would remain inactive and await further developments, and 10% who were Communists and opportunists, would fight for the Communist side. 25X1
21. [] government office workers, out of fear of losing their positions, comprise the group trying to carry out and enforce all the wishes of the regime. 25X1
22. In the city of Prerov [] whose inhabitants were very much opposed to Communism, [] about 90% would join or actively support Allied Forces if low-level StB police and National Security Corps functionaries were eliminated. 25X1 25X1
23. If only weapons and aid were furnished from outside sources to people of Prerov, [] approximately 60% would join in an open rebellion against Communists in peace time, provided an able leader would efficiently organize and lead the rebellion. 25X1
24. [] the citizens of Prerov had had a sad experience toward the end of World War II which would make them wary in any future conflict. While the Soviet Army was approaching Prerov, toward the end of the war, about 25 armed Czech partisans arrived and with the help of the local population disarmed some German soldiers and officers they met in the streets. A new city council was appointed to replace German officials. Shortly thereafter, about 40 SS troopers arrived from Olomouc, arrested the newly-appointed city council members, beat them up badly during the interrogation which followed, and finally shot them to death. Many people fear that the Soviets might resort to similar tactics. 25X1
25. [] members of the Czechoslovak working class would be among the first to cooperate with the Allied Forces. 25X1

Resistance by Religious Groups

26. [] as of the summer of 1954 more people than ever were attending church services in defiance of the regime, which was discouraging church attendance. Up to 1953, classes on religion were conducted in schools after the normal school hours without any hindrance for those desiring to attend. Since September 1954, youths 14 years of age and over were forbidden to attend classes on religion and those under 14 could only attend on a written request from their parents. 25X1 25X1

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